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British Intellectuals and the Great War: A Survey of Intellectual Opinion

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British Intellectuals and the Great War

A Survey of Intellectual Opinion

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Vincent Paul Schmidt

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The period from 1900 to 1914 is generally accepted to have been one of great optimism about the progress of man and society. Most people believed that the world was steadily improving and that whatever perils lay in the future could certainly be overcome. War was felt to be unlikely even though the period had more than its share of imperialism, nationalism, and increasing armaments. All of the great technological inventions only served to remind most people that man had indeed progressed. Beginning in 1914 this feeling of well-being would be shattered as many of the technological improvements would become instruments of death and destruction for many millions of men.

Such a shift from an age of optimism to mass destruction on a global scale had an extremely profound effect upon the intellectuals and thinkers of the time. Their writings reflect the disillusionment apparent in their thought as the world of optimism came tumbling down around them. Thus the war became a great watershed in the history of thought as the great technological strides made in the early years of the century became adapted to warfare.

This thesis will present a survey of the major British thinkers of the time as they grappled with the problems wrought by the war and the culmination of those problems in the peace, as well as their effect on man and the human condition.

As the thinkers and the optimists tried to make the post-war world a better place in which to live, the avengers and the pessimists sought a harsh punishment for the defeated powers. Thus the Versailles Treaty became a focal point for intellectual opposition as the avengers held out for their sadistic demands. The quandary became apparent when the negotiators had to determine what type of treaty they wanted. The choice was between the ideal versus the real--juste milieu versus revanche. The main protagonists at Versailles were Wilson pushing for the idealistic aims as delineated in the Fourteen Points and Clemenceau, occasionally backed by Lloyd-George, who opted for harsher punishments to be meted out against Germany. The result of this conflict is well known.

Finally, there was the League of Nations. In its initial conception it was to be perhaps the answer to the problem of preventing war in the modern age. As it turned out, it was nothing more than an impotent body desirous of peace. The British intellectuals had very definite views on what the League should and could be as well as what it actually became.

Thus the purpose of this thesis is to determine the views of certain British intellectuals and writers by studying their writings and British journals of opinion. Since Great Britain in the 1920's housed a great many brilliant minds, a selection of intellectual figures had to be made in order to best ascertain what the intellectuals thought concerning the war, its outcome as portrayed by the Treaty of Versailles, and the League of Nations.

The first major task is to determine what is meant by the term intellectual. Here two differentiations must be made: the first between the concepts of intelligence and intellect; and the second between British

and American intellectuals. Richard Hofstadter in his Anti-Intellectualism in American Life states that in America the term intellect is frequently used as an epithet while the term intelligence never is. The concept of intelligence is thus viewed as an esteemed quality while intellect is seen as something else entirely. To quote Hofstadter "whereas intelligence seeks to grasp, manipulate, re-order, adjust, intellect examines, ponders, wonders, theorizes, criticizes, imagines".[1] Perhaps it can be said that practicality is the key to the understanding of the fundamental distinctions between the two. Intelligence is viewed, at least in the American culture, as something that can be put to a practical use. A person with intellect also has intelligence but uses the gift in a less than practical manner. Hofstadter uses the comparison between Thomas A. Edison, the great inventive genius, and Josiah Willard Gibbs, the man who laid the theoretical foundations for modern physical chemistry. While Edison became a legend in his own time, Gibbs was scarcely recognized.[2] Edison's inventions had practical uses while Gibbs's accomplishments were in the field of pure research. This is the important distinction.

To determine exactly what an intellectual is one must define the terms involved. There are several interesting definitions of what the term intellectual means but two of the best come from Richard Hofstadter and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Hofstadter points out that much of the work of a culture--that work done by lawyers, doctors, professors, and

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[1]Richard Hofstadter, Anti-Intellectualism in American Life (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), p. 25.

[2]Ibid., pp. 25-26.

engineers--is done by people dependent upon ideas. This, however, is not enough to make that work distinctively intellectual. To Hofstadter, these professional men live off ideas, not for them.[3] Thus the man who lives for ideas can be termed an intellectual. This living for ideas involves to a certain degree the assumption of the role of skeptic in a society. The true intellectual does not accept things as they are but seeks to change those things that are not as they should be. George Bernard Shaw's observation that "some men see things as they are and say why--I dream things that never were and say why not" is the definitive statement about the true role of the intellectual in society, a person who tries to make things ever better.

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., holds a view that differs only slightly. It differs mainly in the seemingly more American pragmatic sense. Schlesinger applies the use of power to the determination of intellectuality. To Schlesinger, an intellectual is that man who is at home in the world of ideas as opposed to the man who is at home in the world of power.[4] The intellectual's inhospitality to the realm of power can be compared to Hofstadter's view of the intellectual's role as that of the skeptic. The very use of the term skeptic implies one who is somehow outside the mainstream of society. This does not mean that the intellectual has to be totally divorced from the world of power, however. The backbenchers in the British Parliament are those members of the opposition party who are skeptical or critical of the direction in which the party in power is

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[3]Hofstadter, Anti-Intellectualism, pp. 26-27.

[4]Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., The Crisis of Confidence (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1969), p. 44.

going. John Maynard Keynes is a good example of an intellectual who worked in close conjunction with men in power without actually being in power himself. This is fairly obvious when one views the treatment of Germany after the war and then compares that treatment to Keynes's opinions on the subject.

The second differentiation which must be made concerning the definition of intellectuality is the difference between American and British intellectuals. American intellectuals historically have been viewed as being something less than patriotic. This feeling arose from the innate skepticism inherent in the thought of the intellectual. Hofstadter's Anti-Intellectualism in American Life is really a history of the mistreatment and misunderstanding of the American intellectual by the American public.

An entirely different situation is apparent in Great Britain. There intellectuals are well treated and their opinions are held with some respect.[5] Thus a study of their views and opinions lends some insight into the thinking of the country as a whole. If such is the case in the present day there is no reason for believing that the same will not hold true for the past. This paper will not attempt to draw conclusions of this sort but will only present the views held by those selected British intellectuals.

The following intellectuals have been selected as being representative of intellectual thought in England as a whole in the wartime period. Those selected--George Bernard Shaw, H.G. Wells, John Maynard Keynes,

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[5]Hofstadter, Anti-Intellectualism, p. 424.

Bertrand Russell, G.K. Chesterton, G. Lowes Dickinson, H.N. Brailsford and Austin Harrison--fit this image very well. A perusal of the British journals of opinion also turns up men who can be considered intellectuals, albeit they are less known than their internationally famous colleagues already mentioned.

This study is important because it is difficult to understand why the British intellectuals thought the way they did while their country was involved in a terrible war. If, however, the intellectuals are seen as operating within their own distinct climate of opinion the issue becomes clearer. Woodrow Wilson, a definite rare avis in the American atmosphere, becomes much easier to understand as part of this British climate of opinion.

To better understand this term climate of opinion, a definition is in order. The term climate of opinion was restored to general usage by Alfred North Whitehead, the eminent philosopher. Carl Becker, the American historian, describes it in his 1932 work The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers. Stated simply, a climate of opinion is an environment in which certain preconceptions, ideas, and ideals are held as true without proof. Becker uses the example of Dante and Thomas Aquinas discussing with us their concepts of a league of nations and natural law. Their replies would be unintelligible to us because their answers would be cast with regard to their medieval climate of opinion. What is arrived at then is the idea that "whether arguments command assent or not depends less upon the logic that conveys them than upon the climate of opinion in which they are sustained".[6]

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[6]Carl Becker. The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1932), p. 5.

The climate of opinion at work in Great Britain during the war was a holdover from Victorian liberalism. This liberalism had a certain amount of idealism involved, as any type of liberalism must for it stresses what should be but is not. Bertrand Russell's Non-Conscription Fellowship during the stormy period of the war is a notable example of this mixture of liberalism and idealism. It is extremely idealistic to be against conscription, and demonstrate against it, while your nation is fighting for its very life against a very strong enemy.

Thus the intellectuals of Great Britain viewed the war just as Woodrow Wilson did, as a war to end all wars. What Wilson suffered at the hands of Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and the American Senate the British intellectuals also suffered. The only difference was that they saw it coming while Wilson did not. What eventually killed the president only made the intellectuals' bitterness increase.

Before entering into any discussion of the views of these intellectuals it is important to study their backgrounds in order to shed some light on how they arrived at their conclusions.

George Bernard Shaw was born in Dublin on July 26, 1856, the son of a minor civil servant. In 1898 his energies began to be concentrated on drama. Shortly afterwards he was made drama critic of the Saturday Review. He became involved with Sidney and Beatrice Webb and became an active socialist, thus automatically relegating himself to the role of skeptic in British society. Even his plays took on a highly polemical tone.

His works on the war and its aftermath are extremely important for an understanding of his temper during this period. Common Sense About the War was published in November 1914 as a supplement to the New Statesman

which he had helped found in 1913. The most important work for this paper was Shaw's What I Really Wrote About the War published in 1931 as a compilation of all his wartime writings. The true impact of Shaw's thought is readily apparent here. Although not normally a passionate or emotional man, Shaw's anger and disillusionment is reflected in these writings.

Herbert George Wells, better known as H.G. Wells, was born on September 21, 1866, at Bromley, Kent. He graduated from London University in 1888 and in 1895 he wrote his first novel The Time Machine. The work was an immediate success and so he continued to write works in the same vein producing, The Wonderful Visit in 1895; The Island of Doctor Moreau in 1896; The Invisible Man in 1897; The War of the Worlds in 1898; The First Men in the Moon in 1901; and The Food of the Gods in 1904.

Wells's talents did not lie only in the realm of science fiction, however. He was animated with a passionate concern for man and society. This was reflected by his turn from fantasy to more realistic comedy, usually portraying lower middle-class life. Drawing upon his own earlier experiences Wells became the spokesman for the frustrated and the inarticulate. He viewed the advent of the war as evidence of the decline of man and society as a whole. Man could progress only if he adapted himself to his changing environment. The onset of World War II proved to Wells that man was not succeeding in adapting. He died a broken and disappointed man on August 13, 1946.

John Maynard Keynes was born June 5, 1883, at Cambridge where he was later educated as a mathematician. After studying economics Keynes was employed by the civil service in India in 1906. Returning to Cambridge

in 1908 as a lecturer he remained there until 1915 when he took a post in the British treasury. In 1919 Keynes found himself as a senior official at Versailles for the peace conference. He was in total disagreement with the severity of the reparations demands to be imposed upon Germany and resigned from his post. It was at this time that he wrote The Economic Consequences of the Peace, his most important work.

As a result of his resignation and subsequent book, Keynes became a public figure, continually embroiled in the economic controversies of the day. As an economist Keynes was without equal. His views in The Economic Consequences of the Peace were finally followed after ten years of economic catastrophe in Germany and his later work, The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money (1936), formed the basis of Franklin D. Roosevelt's economic recovery programs.

When World War II broke out Keynes wrote How To Pay for the War (1940) which proposed a means for controlling inflation. He was an extremely important figure in British wartime finance and negotiated a large U.S. loan to Great Britain. He died in Sussex on April 21, 1946.

Bertrand Russell was born on May 18, 1872 and was destined to become a noted philosopher and mathematician. In some circles his championship of individual liberty makes him comparable to Voltaire in the eighteenth century and John Stuart Mill in the nineteenth century. His major scholarly work, Principia Mathematica, written in collaboration with Alfred North Whitehead, was published in three volumes in 1910, 1912, and 1913. It was with the coming of the war that Russell's concern for individual liberty became apparent.

When war broke out Russell became an active member in the No Con-

scription Fellowship as well as becoming a member of the executive committee of the Union of Democratic Control, the latter being a group made up of opponents to the war. Russell was fined one hundred pounds as the author of a pamphlet criticizing the severity of a two year sentence meted out to a conscientious objector. When Russell refused to pay the fine his library was seized and he was later deprived of his lectureship at the university because of his anti-war activities. The governmental harassment continued when Russell was offered a post in America at Harvard but was refused a passport. This did not deter him however. Russell continued to speak and write against the war and conscription until he received a six month jail sentence in 1918 for a pacifist article he had written. In the 1960's Russell was still demonstrating against war and continued nuclear testing.

G. Lowes Dickinson was an economist and political scientist who lectured at King's College, Cambridge, and the London School of Economics and Political Science. He was a pacifist and an early member of the Union of Democratic Control. He authored many books dealing with political science, history, and philosophy.

Henry Noel Brailsford, an author and journalist, was born in Mirfield, York, in 1873. He was educated at Glasgow University where he received an M.A. Degree with Philosophical and Classical Honours. After graduation Brailsford was the lead-writer successively for the Manchester Guardian, the Tribune, the Daily News, and Nation. His other credentials include membership of the Carnegie International Commission in the Balkans in 1913 and he was a member of the executive committee of the Union of Democratic Control.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton was born May 29, 1874, at Campden Hill, Kensington, and was baptized as a member of the Church of England. His background was typical of a member of the English middle class. His father was a Liberal with relatively strong ties to traditionalism. This traditionalism along with a dogmatic mind led Chesterton to convert to Roman Catholicism. In politics Chesterton referred to himself as a reluctant Socialist being of the opinion that there were only two choices, capitalism or socialism.

At the time of the Boer War Chesterton found himself aligned with the pacifists as he and they both hated the war. Chesterton, however, was not a pacifist but was merely pro-Boer. This alliance with the cause of Britain's enemy becomes rather difficult to understand when Chesterton's views on World War I are studied. He took a completely opposite view than did most of the intellectuals, defending the British and damning the Germans unceasingly. So adept was he at this profession that he was called to write for Wellington House, the Propaganda Ministry. His writings show why he was chosen for the assignment.

CHAPTER TWO

Opinions About The War

On June 28, 1914, Gavrilo Princip stepped out of the shadows of a street in Sarajevo, Serbia, and into the pages of history when he assassinated the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, the heirs to the throne of the Austrian Empire. One month later Austria declared war on Serbia, followed on August 1 and August 3 by German declarations of war on Russia and France. Great Britain entered the war on August 4 and World War I was officially under way. All the years of diplomatic jockeying, threats and counter-threats were ended. Now everything was relegated to that final instrument of diplomacy--force.

Germany's invasion of Belgium is generally accepted as the cause of Great Britain's entry into the war. The mightiest naval power in the world could not stand by and watch gallant little Belgium be crushed beneath the armed might of the German Huns. And so amid great rejoicing and celebration, the world went to war.

All British intellectuals were appalled by some aspect of the war. Gilbert Keith Chesterton was disgusted by Germany's actions while the rest of the intellectuals dealt with in this paper were appalled by the war itself. Chesterton will be dealt with first as he seems to be the most enigmatic of the intellectuals studied in this paper.

Chesterton published his first major work on the war The Barbarism of Berlin in 1914. Here he pointed out that one of the key words of the

war was the word barbarian. The Prussians had applied it to the Russians; the Prussians had applied it to the British and the French; now Chesterton in the name of England was applying it to the Germans and was striving to prove that they deserved the title.[7] Chesterton stated that when the German referred to the Russian as barbarian, he used the term in the sense of imperfectly civilized and that when the British and French called the Prussians barbarians the term was used to denote an enemy of civilization.[8] This to Chesterton was a much more telling epithet and one that the Germans rightly deserved.

According to Chesterton, the Prussian exhibited many characteristics of barbarism. For example, the Prussian was totally incapable of reciprocity--the give and take of civilized life--because he was intellectually incapable of this thought.[9] This Chesterton viewed as the major threat to Europe and the world--the Prussian's inability to live as a societal creature. The Prussian lacked shyness, that is, the tact, diplomacy, and good taste needed to get along in the world. Chesterton succinctly stated that the Prussian was an animal who "eats and makes love noisily".[10]

Since the Prussian did not follow any of the normal customs and mores of civilized life, it would be fairly obvious that the Prussian would be a liar too. Chesterton stated that the Prussian would do anything to achieve

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[7]Gilbert Keith Chesterton, The Barbarism of Berlin (London: Cassell and Co., Ltd., 1914), p. 26.

[8]Ibid., pp. 28-29.

[9]Ibid., p. 41.

[10]Ibid., p. 90.

his goals, including lying. Chesterton set up a comic calendar of how events could have gone. It showed the difficulty of a civilized country when dealing with an unscrupulous barbarian.

July 24: Germany invades Belgium.

July 25: England declares war.

July 26: Germany promises not to annex Belgium if England withdraws from the war.

July 27: England withdraws from the war.

July 28: Germany annexes Belgium. England declares war.

July 29: Germany promises not to annex France. England withdraws from the war.

July 30: Germany annexes France. England declares war.

July 31: Germany promises not to annex England.

August 1: England withdraws from the war. Germany invades England.[11]

The fact that the Prussians were inveterate liars did not bother Chesterton so much as their crime of the calculated misuse of the educational system to achieve desired ends. Not even the professors were immune to the callous nationalism spewed forth by the government. They used their talents to "prove whatever the government wanted them to prove, and the worst part was that they did it willingly."

> If the English had been on the German side, the German professors would have noted what irresistible energies had evolved the Teutons. As the English are on the other side, the German professors will say that these Teutons were not sufficiently evolved, or they will say that they were not Teutons. Probably they will say both. But the truth is that all they call evolution should rather be called evasion. They tell us they are opening windows of enlightenment and doors of progress. The truth is that they are breaking up

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[11]Chesterton, Barbarism of Berlin, pp. 10-11.

> the whole house of human intellect, that they may abscond in any direction. There is an ominous and almost monstrous parallel between the position of their over-rated philosophers and of their comparatively under-rated soldiers. For what their professors call roads of progress are really routes of escape.[12]

Chesterton became even more incensed and derogatory toward Germany in his 1915 work The Appetite of Tyranny. This work dealt more with the defects in the Prussian character, those defects which make the Prussian a true barbarian. Chesterton pointed out that two facts were well-known in the civilized world. The first is that Prussia is a second-rate country and the second is that to any Prussian, Prussia is first-rate and is ready to allow the rest of the world to take advantage of the glory that is Prussia.[13]

This preoccupation with the Prussian deficiencies in character is carried over to include all Germans. Chesterton saw Prussia as the root of the evil in Germany which lowers all Germans to the level of dogs and negroes who have no reactions.[14] Because the Germans allowed this Prussian spirit to overtake them and then wallow in it, all Germans are stupid and mad, failing in everything except being stupid enough to carry out their insane culture. When they fail in this respect they must resort to a brutal obedience, that is, to force their culture on others.[15]

Chesterton did admit to some strong points in the Prussian character:

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[12]Chesterton, Barbarism of Berlin, pp. 94-95.

[13]Gilbert Keith Chesterton, The Appetite of Tyranny (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1915), p. 95.

[14]Ibid., pp. 110-111.

[15]Ibid., pp. 100-101.

failure in honor, egomania, the itch for tyranny, mental shapelessness, and a potential infinity for excuses.[16] Some of the Prussian strong points were best exhibited in the Imperial proclamations admitting and justifying atrocities for their fright value. The admitted purpose of these atrocities was to terrify civilian populations. But the Kaiser was not too proud to write to President Wilson to complain that the British were using dum-dum bullets.[17]

Chesterton realized that Germany presented a very great threat to the peace of Europe as well as to the peace of the world. He also knew that Europe had to be the agent through which the Germans must be stopped. All the energy of Europe had to be put forth to stop Prussia because the Prussian would continue to do things, as a maniac does, until he is forced to stop.[18]

Chesterton's strong religious background is reflected in his third book on the war, The Crimes of England, published in 1916. Here Chesterton portrays Germany's invasion of Belgium as an anti-religious crusade begun by the heathen Huns.

> The statics of non-combatants killed and tortured by this time only stun the imagination. But two friends of my own have been in villages sacked by the Prussian march. One saw a tabernacle containing the Sacrament patiently picked out in pattern by shot after shot. The other saw a rocking-horse and the wooden toys in a nursery laboriously hacked to pieces. Those two facts together will be enough to satisfy some of us of the name of the spirit that had passed.[19]

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[16]Chesterton, Appetite of Tyranny, pp. 93-94.

[17]Ibid., pp. 43-44.

[18]Ibid., p. 109.

[19]G.K. Chesterton, The Crimes of England (New York: John Lane Co., 1916), p. 160.

The Prussian infinity for excuses mentioned earlier is discussed in this work as a result of the sinking of the Lusitania. The Germans were not even able to stick to one story. Chesterton saw five possible stories the Germans could use to rationalize the ship's demise. First, the Germans could declare that the Lusitania was a troop-ship subject to the laws of war. Secondly, they could state that it was an unlawful munitions carrier, again subject to sinking by an enemy vessel. Thirdly, the Germans could say that the passengers had been sufficiently warned of the danger of travelling on ships of the enemy in war-time (as was indeed the case). Fourthly, the Germans could declare that there were guns on board the Lusitania which were about to be fired at the submarine, thus making the sinking a clear case of self defense. Finally and somewhat sardonically, Chesterton suggested that the Germans could say that the British sank the ship in order to make a stronger case for American entry into the war.[20] Thus Chesterton in effect begins the revisionism of the causes for American entry into the war by listing the various propositions used later by historians to explain the reason for the sinking of the Lusitania.

Chesterton defends Great Britain's entry into the war in a letter to a fictional German professor, Doctor Whirlwind. The letter was written in reply to the German charges of British crimes. Chesterton explains the real crimes of England.

> I have therefore thought it advisable to provide you with a catalogue of the real crimes of England; and I have selected them on a principle which cannot fail to interest

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[20]Chesterton, Crimes of England, pp. 12-14.

> and please you. On many occasions we have been very wrong indeed. We were very wrong indeed when we took part in preventing Europe from putting a term to the impious piracies of Frederick the Great....We were very wrong indeed when we allowed the peaceful king of Denmark to be robbed in broad daylight by a brigand named Bismarck; and when we allowed the Prussian swash-bucklers to enslave and silence the French provinces which they could neither govern nor persuade....We were very wrong indeed when we praised the soulless Prussian education and copied the soulless Prussian laws.[21]

Thus Chesterton disregarded any discussion of German innocence in the war. In this regard he was definitely odds with George Bernard Shaw.

George Bernard Shaw's views on the war differed markedly from those of Gilbert Keith Chesterton. While Chesterton was dogmatic and traditional, Shaw was somewhat of a radical and non-conformist. Shaw did not like modern capitalist society and so could not wholeheartedly support the British and French war effort. On the other hand the Hohenzollerns were too militaristic for his taste so Shaw could not really support them either. He saw the warring countries as two pirate fleets preparing for battle. Since Shaw was on one of the fleets it was important to him which side won but this in no way altered the fact that both sides were pirates. As Shaw himself put it "All the ensigns were Jolly Rogers; but mine was clearly the one with the Union Jack in the corner".[22]

Thus Shaw's voice became a voice of reason speaking out amid a clamor of unreasonable men. He believed that the war should not be based on racial or national characteristics since the war was between governments, not people. Shaw was distressed at the propaganda being put forth

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[21]Chesterton, Crimes of England, pp. 25-26.

[22]George Bernard Shaw, What I Really Wrote About the War (New York: Brentano's, 1914), p. 2.

by his government portraying the Germans as nothing better than blood-thirsty, rapacious tyrants led by the Junkers who were bent on world domination. Shaw pointed out that most Englishmen did not really know what a Junker was. To most Englishmen a Junker was a German officer with bad manners and a nasty habit of cutting down innocent civilians with his sabre. This was the definition used by the propaganda people at Wellington House. Shaw took his definition from the Encyclopadisches Worterbuch which defined Junker as a young nobleman, younker, lording, country squire, or country gentleman.[23] With this definition in mind Shaw stated that there was not any real difference between a Junker and an English country gentleman. Most Englishmen were hard put to believe this, especially the country gentlemen.

Having pointed out that Germans are no different than Englishmen, Shaw then went on to say that the propaganda and legends of crime used to inflame the public indignation must be discarded if peace is to be restored. The facts must be put in order by separating what is true from what is false.[24]

Since one of the major causes of the war according to most Englishmen was the German invasion of neutral Belgium, Shaw discussed this first as his first strike to show the foolishness and stupidity of the war. The basis for all of Shaw's writings was his belief that the entire concept of neutrality was absurd with international law being as vague as it was. According to international law a neutral state is one which does

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[23]Shaw, What I Wrote, p. 20.

[24]Ibid., p. 256.

not participate in a war which is in progress and treats the belligerents impartially. Neutrality gives no assurance that the neutral will not enter the war nor be attacked.[25] Great Britain used the violation of Belgian neutrality as a ploy to try to get the United States into the war. Shaw stated that Great Britain had an agreement to come to the aid of France even if Belgium were not invaded. This was not really the case but Shaw believed it to be so. Thus, Belgium had to resist the invasion in order to make the impact on public opinion more forceful. It would have been more logical, and certainly more intelligent, to allow the Germans free passage through the country.[26] Since free passage was not forthcoming, Germany found it necessary to force her way through Belgium. Thus she was seen as the most evil country in the world. To read the British press one would assume that to be so. Shaw, however, did not believe in the ipso facto guilt of Germany for the war and the destruction of Belgium. He felt that the Belgian claims had to be settled but that the Entente should share some of the cost of the restoration since it had had a hand in the destruction.[27]

Since the conflict was already going on, Shaw had very definite views on how the war should be waged for the Allied side as well as for the Entente. His views on how the war should have been waged are important because they set the stage for the peace which Shaw knew had to

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[25]Vernon Van Dyke, International Politics (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966), p. 280.

[26]Shaw, What I Wrote, p. 98.

[27]Ibid., p. 77.

come someday. In order for that peace to be a lasting one the following provisions had to be carried out.

First, the war had to be pushed vigorously but not so vigorously so as to crush Germany between the Anglo-French combination and Russia. The end of the war had to come about as a result of the Anglo-French forces gaining a hegemony over Germany without the complete destruction of Germany. Any victory gained over Germany with Russian aid would mean the end of western European liberalism. Shaw showed a very definite anti-Russian bias here. He believed that backward Russia had no business in the war at all and took great pleasure when Russia, having embarked on the Russian revolution, withdrew from the war.

Second, Germany had to be driven out of Belgium as a means of restoring that country's territorial integrity. Since this was the supposed reason why Great Britain entered the war, then the war should end when Belgium was cleared.

Third, war "as a school of character and a nurse of virtue," must be ended after this war.[28] Shaw believed that war had become something glorious when it should have been something to be feared and avoided. The celebrations greeting the announcements of the war were enough to convince Shaw of the viability of this point.

Shaw became more specific, that is he dealt with more specific points, when he discussed the question of guilt in the war. He stated that neither England nor Germany should claim any moral superiority in negotiations at the end of the war. To Shaw, both sides were equally

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[28]Shaw, What I Wrote, p. 93.

guilty.

Great Britain's basic claim for moral superiority over Germany rested on the belief that she had fulfilled treaty obligations to come to the aid of innocent Belgium as she lay helpless before the Hun invasion. Shaw stated that the case against Germany for the violation of Belgium was of no moral value to Great Britain because she had allowed the violation of the Treaty of Paris by Russia (i.e., the violation of Black Sea neutrality) and the violation of the Treaty of Berlin by Austria (i.e., the seizure of Bosnia-Herzegovina) without resorting to war. If Great Britain was so interested in the sanctity of treaties, Shaw asked, why did she not come out more forcefully when the treaties of Paris and Berlin were violated? It is possible to agree with Shaw on this point as those who argued most vehemently for an immediate British response to the German invasion argued on the basis of the alleged natural inviolability of treaties. They drastically overstated their case; Shaw merely responded in like manner.

The fact that the invasion of Belgium was used merely for propaganda purposes by Great Britain becomes more apparent with the knowledge that Great Britain would have defended France even without Belgium's invasion. In fact, the whole issue of Belgian neutrality was illusory. France and Great Britain only stood to gain and Germany to lose if the German attack were confined to the heavily fortified Franco-German border. If Belgium were invaded, Great Britain and France knew they would be invited by the Belgians to enter the country. Thus Belgian neutrality worked only against Germany as it would be lifted to allow France and Great Britain in.

Shaw doubted that the 1839 Treaty of London was valid for use against Germany in 1914 as it had been aimed originally at the French threat to Belgium. Even if the treaty's validity were beyond question, it is doubtful that its breach would constitute a casus belli.[29]

Shaw's view on how Germany should have waged the war was most logical and realistic. The German military minds would probably have been appalled at such a suggestion as Shaw had for them. According to Shaw, Germany should have defended herself against Russia alone, not fearing a rear attack by Great Britain and France. If France had attacked, Great Britain would not have been able to come to her aid as she would have been the aggressor. The French government would also have had a great deal of difficulty convincing its people of the necessity of a dangerous attack on Germany when Russia had been the aggressor in the first place.[30]

Instead Germany attacked France first, only incidentally violating Belgium on the way in. This gave the British militarists the excuse they needed to get involved. Shaw believed that Germany had made this stupid move because stupid men were involved. They viewed the war as a giant chess game; first France would be swept off the board and then the turn-about would be made to take care of Russia.[31] But the French defense was strong enough to check the German advance and history has recorded the rest of the game.

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[29]Shaw, What I Wrote, pp. 93-94.

[30]Ibid., p. 41.

[31]Ibid., p. 42.

Shaw not only wrote concerning how things should have been done but was also in the forefront striving to stop the war before it really got started. The 7 November 1914 issue of The Nation printed an open letter from George Bernard Shaw to the President of the United States.[32] The letter petitioned President Wilson as head of the chief neutral power to invite the other neutral powers to confer with the United States to get Britain, France, and Germany out of Belgium and to make them fight out their quarrel on their own territories. The letter was a cogent appeal to a reasonable man to help Europe out of a most unreasonable time.

Shaw saw how the ancient rules of war had changed under advancing technology. Men now fought and died to gain a few hundred yards of worthless devastated ground which would be recaptured the next day by the enemy. Neutrality was a thing of the past; civilians had become totally involved in the war effort, both as economic entities and as casualties. Shaw realized that this war was not the end of an era but the beginning and preview of worse terrors to come. Pessimistically Shaw wrote, "the next war, if permitted to occur, will be no 'sport of kings,' no game of chance played with live soldiers and won by charging them into dead ones, but a scientific attempt to destroy cities and kill civilians."[33] Twenty-one years later this prophecy was fulfilled.

Perhaps the most visionary of the intellectuals was Herbert George Wells. For example, he wrote in 1916 that there would be no conclusive

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[32]See Appendix for full text of letter.

[33]Shaw, What I Wrote, p. 273.

end to the war with a triumphal entry into London, Paris, Berlin, or Moscow but a negotiated peace between shattered powers.[34] This was an excellent assumption to be made as early as 1916. It is too bad that the assumption never became reality. True, there were no triumphal entries into any major city but neither was there a negotiated peace. What occurred was a dictated peace after a war in which there was no clear cut defeat for the German forces. They were retreating but there was no final crushing defeat. Instead the stab-in-the-back legend received fertile soil in which to grow. It would flower under Adolph Hitler.

Wells had hoped that a principle of nationalities would develop in Europe, ultimately becoming an arrangement of nationalities, a type of "United States," which would lessen interstate rivalries. He based this concept on the Swiss canton system wherein each canton has its own religion and culture but is coalesced with the other cantons into a federation.[35] Wells hoped that such a canton system would develop in Europe because he was distressed by the emphasis being placed by his countrymen on the evil of the Germans. Wells had worked for a time in Wellington House, the British propaganda ministry, as head of the German section. He resigned on July 17, 1918 voicing his dissatisfaction with the tone of the propaganda being disseminated. Wells wanted only the overthrow of the German militarists; the Propaganda Ministry wanted, at least as seen in their propaganda, the extermination of the German

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[34]H.G. Wells, What Is Coming? (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1916), pp. 35-36.

[35]Ibid., pp. 193-194.

race.[36] To Wells the war was not one against the German race but one against the Hohenzollern dynasty.

> Let us not be blinded by the passions of war into confusing a people with its government and the artificial Kultur of a brief century. There is a Germany, great and civilised, a decent and admirable people, masked by Imperialism, blinded by the vanity of the easy victories of half a century ago, wrapped in illusion.[37]

Wells then became the patriot again. While admitting that Germany was hated because of the Hohenzollerns, he stated that economic warfare would continue as long as every German identified with the Hohenzollern dreams of empire.[38] Thus although the war was being waged by the Hohenzollerns it was the average German citizen who had to be killed and defeated on the field of battle if the Allies were to be victorious. In effect then, Wells was disturbed by the intensity of the race hatred spewing forth from Wellington House. He did realize that some passions had to be stirred up if the average Englishman was to go forth to murder his fellow man but his reasonableness and intellect had been assaulted by the rabid tone of the propaganda.

The reasonableness of Wells's arguments became more apparent when he discussed the "war crimes" of the Germans. He believed that if a just peace were to be achieved acts like the invasion of Belgium and the sinking of the Lusitania would have to be put into a special category of symptoms of war calling for special punishments or reparations. Above all they must not be made a part of the ultimate peace settlement as they

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[36]George G. Bruntz, Allied Propaganda and the Collapse of the German Empire in 1918 (California: Stanford University Press, 1938), pp. 27-28.

[37]Wells, What Is Coming?, p. 197.

[38]Ibid., pp. 198-200.

would only exacerbate feelings.[39]

Wells, with his scientific background and knowledge of the mechanics of modern warfare, realized the terrible potential of mechanized warfare as well as the fact that the rules of war were now subject to drastic revision. The actions of the submarines helped usher in this new age as the submarine's effectiveness was limited unless surprise could be achieved. Wells knew that war had gone beyond the realm of the old rules of cruiser warfare where the ship was stopped and warned before being sunk.

This viewpoint was diametrically the opposite of that held by Woodrow Wilson who believed that the nineteenth-century rules of war had to be observed. Wells stated that this merely showed the naivete of the Americans concerning the war.

> Some /Americans/ seemed to be under the impression that, war or no war, an American tourist had a perfect right to travel about in the Vosges or up and down the Rhine just as he saw fit. They thought he had just to wave a little American flag, and the referee would blow a whistle and hold up the battle until he had got by safely.[40]

When this is compared to Wilson's statements, especially those concerning neutral travel on the high seas as a right, Wells's point is well made.

Wells's comprehension of the horrors of modern warfare made him able to understand and view more objectively the actions of Germany. This objectivity and understanding disappeared when he wrote as an historian. Throughout his Outline of History the tone is anti-militaristic.

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[39]H.G. Wells, Italy, France and Britain at War (Chicago: M.A. Donohue and Co., 1917), p. 263.

[40]H.G. Wells, What Is Coming?, p. 216.

Wells did not like military men and this was reflected by his disparaging remarks about them. Seeing Prussia as the most militarized state in Europe, Wells's venom reached its highest level.

> Prussianized Germany was at once the newest and the most antiquated thing in Western Europe. She was the best and the wickedest state of her time.[41]

The Germans were great because they had come so far in a relatively short time. It was the means they used which Wells objected to. Wells stated that no other modern state sinned so greatly against education as did Germany. The excesses of patriotic vanity were engendered by the educational system of Germany. Teachers and professors who did not preach the superiority of the Germans were "doomed to failure and obscurity".[42] Thus the educational system had been subverted for nationalistic ends. This led to a stifling of the creative imagination in all areas. This was most readily apparent in the realm of military science. Wells hit this area especially hard because of his hatred of military men in general. With all the new weapons and inventions of war, military science was far out of date at the onset of the great war. Wells stated that the Schlieffen Plan was the best example of the out-of-date tactics employed by the Germans. The Schlieffen Plan, designed to knock France out first, was based on an extremely strong right flank which would sweep rapidly through Belgium and northern France to out-flank the French armies. This plan, which was used in the great war, had been made some twenty years before that war occurred. It completely ignored the political conse-

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[41]H.G. Wells, The Outline of History: Being a Plain History of Life and Mankind (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1921), volume II, p. 479.

[42]Wells, Outline of History, p. 480.

quences which would be wrought by the violation of Belgian neutrality as well as the limits placed on the speed of the advance by modern artillery and machine-gun fire. This, to Wells, was what made the war even more terrible, the lack of imagination of the military men.[43] When the war came the Schlieffen Plan failed because Graf Helmuth von Moltke, Schlieffen's successor, did not keep the right flank strong enough to finish the job.

Regarding the alleged atrocities committed by the Germans in Belgium, Wells believed that too great a fuss was being made. He stated that the real atrocity was the invasion itself and that Great Britain had had to enter the war once that violation was accomplished.[44]

Over all, Wells did not see the war as being caused by some inherently evil monsters called Germans. The war had been visibly approaching in 1913 but there was neither the will nor the understanding to prevent it. Most of the population viewed the war as a new excitement to be indulged in. The horror of what the war turned out to be was not real to the moods of the time.[45]

Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson was another of the intellectuals who wrote on the causes of the war but he did it from the point of view of the political scientist. Dickinson traced the war to the Franco-Prussian rivalry engendered by the war of 1870 and the Anglo-German

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[43]Wells, Outline of History, p. 513.

[44]Ibid., pp. 511-512.

[45]Ibid., p. 572.

rivalry to Germany's desire for a strong navy which challenged Great Britain's role as mistress of the seas.[46] These things, however, merely established the sides for the war; they did not directly cause the war. Dickinson believed that the invasion of Belgium was not even the cause of the war but only a consequence of it. Once Germany was committed to war there was really no military alternative for her but to go through Belgium to get to France. Edward Grey had intimated that England would defend France regardless. Thus it made no difference to Germany if Belgium were invaded since Great Britain would enter the war anyway. What the invasion did do was to strengthen British public opinion against Germany, and this did hurt the Germans. Through the efforts of Wellington House and its effective use of propaganda, the war became a glorious crusade against the Hun.[47] It would not seem so glorious when those soldiers so imbued with the spirit of the salvation of Belgium reached the front.

Dickinson saw the war as a quest for security with Germany feeling the need for a large navy and Great Britain seeing this as a direct threat to her power. From this point of view the fever rapidly accelerated until full scale war was in progress. Dickinson doubted that true peace could be achieved or maintained if the enemy was completely crushed. As an example he cited the case of Prussia after Jena and its subsequent rise to power. France too had suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of Prussia in 1871 but had risen again to great

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[46]Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, War: Its Nature, Cause and Cure (London: G. Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1923), pp. 58-59.

[47]Ibid., p. 74.

power status.[48] The desire for revenge used as a means of pulling a country up again was too strong to be taken lightly. Thus Dickinson was prophetic to a certain degree. While Germany was not actually crushed on the field of battle, the Treaty of Versailles was certainly a crushing and humiliating blow. Germany's rise and subsequent revenge on the perpetrators of that treaty is only too well known.

If the espousal of minority viewpoints or unpopular stands in any way constitutes intellectuality, Bertrand Russell stands preeminent among thinkers of the twentieth century. His views were such that during World War I he was actually considered a dangerous individual by his government and was forbidden by government order entry into any restricted area.[49] In World War I England's restricted area was any territory near the sea, often including whole counties. Perhaps the government feared that if Russell got too near the sea he might signal the enemy for some treasonable purpose. The government's harassment of Russell became so intense that his passport was revoked. Thus he could not even earn a living as he had to forego a position at Harvard since he had no passport. This bothered Russell greatly because it meant that Britain, his "free" homeland was depriving him of his physical liberty.

The beginning of the war instituted in Russell a sort of mental rejuvenation causing him to discard his old prejudices and to re-think

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[48]Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, The Choice Before Us (G. Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1917), p. 257.

[49]Bertrand Russell, Justice in War Time (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1918), p. v.

certain fundamental questions. He did not believe that Europe was insane enough to go to war but he was realistic enough to know that if war came England would be involved.[50] He hoped that England would remain neutral but realized that this was impossible when he saw the response of the populace to the war. Russell had believed, as did most pacifists, that wars were forced on unwilling populations by Machiavellian governments.[51] The overwhelmingly joyful response of the average person to the coming of the war caused Russell to re-think his position. He came to view the statesmen as the true harbingers of the war as they were the ones who made the decisions which sent young men to their slaughter. The fact that the young men did not seem to mind going to war meant that the statesmen merely loosed popular forces held within the population. This, however, did not mitigate Russell's ire toward the statesmen. Even though a pacifist Russell wrote: "For several weeks I felt that if I should happen to meet Asquith or Grey I should be unable to refrain from murder."[52] Russell's low opinion of the statesmen of the time was not confined only to the British variety. He expressed indignation over the fact that no statesman was thinking of the good of all.

> Is there no statesman who can think in terms of Europe, not only of separate nations? Is our own civilisation a thing of no account to all our rulers?[53]

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[50]Bertrand Russell, The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1969), vol. II, p. 3.

[51]Ibid., pp. 3-4.

[52]Ibid., p. 7.

[53]Russell, Justice in War Time, p. 117.

Although he was disturbed by the fact that Great Britain would go to war, Russell was tortured by his own patriotism. As a pacifist he abhorred war but his love of country made him desire the defeat of Germany. However, he did protest the propaganda of Great Britain as it sickened him as much as the slaughter did.

> As a lover of truth, the national propaganda of all the belligerent nations sickened me. As a lover of civilization, the relent to barbarism appalled me.[54]

Other protests took other forms. One of these was an open letter to President Wilson written in 1915 which depicted Russell's belief that European civilization was in danger of complete and utter destruction unless the president would negotiate the end of the war. Russell pointed out that he had no office which would have lent authority to his plea but could only write as one concerned with reason and mercy.[55]

The theme of the war threatening to put an end to civilization appeared again in Russell's writings. He believed that civilization would be threatened when war became common-place thus making men callous to its effects.[56] He believed that most men saw the horror of war and realized the evil it caused but that excessive nationalism and chauvinism caused men to lose their perspective when viewing war.

> War is felt to be the ultimate test of a nation's manhood, the ultimate proof of its vigour and of its

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[54]Russell, Autobiography, p. 7.

[55]Ibid., pp. 22-26.

[56]Russell, Justice in War Time, p. 107.

right to exist.[57]

The problem was that men viewed war as evil when other nations were involved in it. Then it was possible to look at the refugees, the dead, the wounded, and the maimed as casualties of some useless adventure. However, when one's own nation was involved, war became a necessity, albeit an evil necessity, but a necessity all the same to prove to the world that that country was strong and vital. Survival of the fittest became the key to the situation and the evils and inhumanity of war were pushed aside.

On August 12, 1914, Russell wrote a letter to the London Nation which was published on 15 August. The letter protested Great Britain's share in the destruction of Germany. Russell stated that certain things should always remain constant; for example, if an Englishman had killed a German one month before, he would be hanged as a murderer. Now, if that Englishman killed a German, he would be seen as a patriot and would be decorated as a hero. The blame for this unwholesome state of affairs lay with the statesmen, especially the British statesmen, who were bent on war regardless of Germany's actions. Russell was referring specifically to Edward Grey's reply to the German ambassador stating that he could not say that Great Britain would remain neutral if Belgium were not violated. No statements on conditions for neutrality could be elicited from Grey. As a result Russell could only say:

> I cannot resist the conclusion that the Government has failed in its duty to the nation by not revealing long-standing arrangements with the French, until, at

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[57]Russell, Justice in War Time, p. 61.

> the last moment, it made them the basis of an appeal to honor; that it has failed in its duty to Europe by not declaring its attitude at the beginning of the crisis; and that it has failed in its duty to humanity by not informing Germany of conditions which would insure its non-participation in a war which, whatever its outcome, must cause untold hardship and the loss of many thousands of our bravest and noblest citizens.[58]

Russell's protests took other forms as well. The most visual was his six month imprisonment for writing an article for The Tribunal, a paper published by the No Conscription Fellowship. In the article Russell stated that American soldiers would be used as strike breakers in England to avert a labor crisis. This statement was the last straw for the British government and so Russell was packed off to prison. He did not find prison life horrifying, rather he said it was quite agreeable. He was allowed to read, do some writing, and was able to smuggle out certain other letters and pamphlets in some rather ingenious ways.[59] Actually Russell's imprisonment merely served to increase his stature among opponents of the war as it showed the British government in its most spiteful state.

As stated earlier Russell was concerned because England, his "free" country, had seen fit to deprive him of his livelihood and his freedom. It was the injustice of the government that really bothered him, not only the government's injustice toward him but also that injustice meted out to other people. The government's injustice toward the masses was demonstrated by the fact that it chose to participate in the war. War itself was the greatest of all evils. Russell stated that "sympathy

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[58]Russell, Autobiography, pp. 42-25.

[59]Ibid., p. 30.

with Belgium should make us hate war rather than Germany".[60] On a less esoteric level war visited more specific evils on humanity.

The first, and one of the worst, evils was the factthat a large number of young men, the most fit, were killed, maimed, or driven mad. Here was the beginning of the "lost generation" theme so prevalent in the 1920's. The cream of European youth was destroyed and for what?

The tragedies inflicted on non-combatants were the second great evil brought about by the war. World War I was the first war which really dislocated the lives of non-combatants, socially, economically, culturally, and far too often physically.

Another evil caused by the war was the slowing of economic progress. As economic progress was slowed so was social progress. To the middle class person economic progress was a foregone conclusion but at the lower levels of the social and economic strata it was not. Without a certain amount of economic progress at these levels, social and spiritual progress was impossible. The question became one of how could people be expected to develop if they were unable to prosper economically? This was Russell's lead-in to a discussion of socialism which he believed was the sanest force in Eruope because of its internationalism and ability to preserve a certain degree of humanity. Russell did not mention the fact that the various socialist parties killed internationalism by voting war credits to their respective governments thus getting caught up in the tide of public opinion which heralded the beginning of the war.

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[60]Russell, Justice in War Time, p. 24.

The worst tragedy engendered by the war was the hatred and injustice it caused. Russell believed that the war was due to blindness to the comity of mankind. It was not a physical necessity which caused men to fight but their own stupidity and chauvinism. Russell thus viewed human nature as basically good but somewhat lacking when it came to acting in its own best interests.[61]

Russell did not confine his views only to the rather philosophical topics already mentioned. On a more specific level, he did not believe that any of the combatants were justified in the war since, in his opinion, war was a crime under all circumstances.[62] All the talk about Great Britain's coming to the defense of neutral Belgium was just so much pap for public opinion. Belgium was not the determining factor for Britain's entry into the war but the threat to France was. Russell agreed that the German invasion of Belgium mustered British public opinion because:

> Belgium showed Germany at its worst, but it did not show us at our best. It gave Germany an occasion for brutal violence; it gave our Foreign Office an occasion for hypocrisy.[63]

The fact that Belgium was not the major factor in the decision for war can be seen through a study of history. In 1887 there was tension between France and Germany. War was expected and the likelihood of Germans marching through Belgium was admitted. The British newspapers, as reflectors of public opinion, concluded that the obligation to Belgium

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[61]Russell, Justice in War Time, pp. 23-26.

[62]Ibid., p. 19.

[63]Ibid., p. 124.

did not require going to war. In 1914 the British obligation to Belgium was stated as resting entirely on the 1839 Treaty of London which had guaranteed Belgian neutrality. If Belgium were so important, why was England ready to enter a conflict in 1914 but not in 1887? Russell viewed it simply as a change in the British view of British interests.[64]

What happened was that the Anglo-German rivalry came to a head in 1914. Prior to this Great Britain had acted with hostility toward Germany in the Morocco crisis.[65] In fact, it can be said that the policy of the Entente encouraged the warlike elements in Germany by showing that the Entente was ready for war.[66] The crises were averted only at the last moment but the underlying tension and hostility was still present. 1914 simply brought it into the open.

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[64]Russell, Justice in War Time, p. 124.

[65]Ibid., p. 193.

[66]Ibid., p. 199.

CHAPTER THREE

Peace Conference and Treatment of Germany

What happened at Versailles was very different from what the intellectuals believed necessary to achieve a just peace. We will see what suggestions were given by the intellectuals as they voiced their hopes for the future of Europe and the world. Next we will see the peace as it actually turned out as well as the opinions in favor of and against the treaty. Lastly we will study the reparations question as it clearly affected Germany more than anything else in the treaty.

George Bernard Shaw's views, especially those expressed in his "Peace Conference Hints," shows best the intellectual's stand on the peace. He believed that the map of Europe had to be redrawn to make sure that war could not easily occur again. This redrawing would not be done by some omnipotent and omniscient Inquiry but would occur as a result of plebiscites to determine the will of the people involved.[67]

Another way in which the peace could be re-established and maintained was to establish a hegemony of peace involving Germany, France, and Great Britain. This hegemony would make a repeat of 1914 impossible as Germany and France would be allied. World War I occurred when Germany and France became involved in a Russian-Austrian dispute.[68]

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[67]George Bernard Shaw. What I Really Wrote About the War (New York: Brentano's, 1931), pp. 65-66.

[68]Ibid., pp. 68-69.

Shaw was not so much a believer in the balance of power concept to maintain peace as he was a supporter of ideology as the basis for the post-war world. He believed that it was absurd that England should have joined Russia in destroying Germany when the Russian Tsarist government was the enemy of every English liberty.[69] Germany was closer to England in ideology than Russia was and so Germany must be saved. Shaw's position was not unlike Winston Churchill's after World War II as both believed Germany must remain strong as a buffer against Russia. To this end, Shaw stated the Great Britain's desire for revenge against Germany should be reconsidered. The blockade alone had caused 763,000 Germans to die of starvation for no other reason than revenge.[70] This was not the way to achieve peace and stability. The militarists, however, wanted Germany "bled white" and the blockade was a good way of doing this. Shaw had a suggestion for his countrymen who felt this way. Rather than sinking Germany's fleet or annexing her colonies it would be better to take care of her numbers. The soldier it took seconds to kill, it took nine months of travail for a woman to breed and eighteen years to ripen. Thus to insure that Germany could never field an army again, simply kill seventy-five percent of all German women under sixty years of age.[71] This very effectively showed how Shaw viewed the continued blockade of Germany. He believed that militarism must not be seen as a peculiarly Prussian institution. It

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[69]George Bernard Shaw. What I Really Wrote About the War (New York: Brentano's, 1931), p. 70.

[70]Ibid., pp. 308-309.

[71]Ibid., p. 63.

must be admitted that Great Britain's conduct of the war was no better than Germany's.[72]

Shaw delineated some very specific points concerning what should be accepted before any of the parties even sat down at Versailles.

(1) All parties should enter Paris on equal terms morally regarding the planning and preparation for the war since self-preservation was the basis for all actions.

(2) Since a naval blockade decided the war, it must be admitted that Great Britain has a power no other country has--the power of starvation.

(3) The United States feels that she must have a fleet capable of coping with any existing armament unless the League can change the armament situation.

(4) Since Germany's desire for a strong fleet led to World War I, the US. need for a fleet is the first step toward the next war unless the League becomes a reality.

(5) The League must be a combination of states with settled responsible governments of the democratic type.

(6) Governments of the North American republic type should be eligible for League membership without question. Monarchies must satisfy the League that they are responsible.

(7) Germany cannot be admitted until her government is settled but peace cannot be insured unless Germany is admitted.

(8) The campaign of hatred against Germany must be ended.

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[72]George Bernard Shaw. What I Really Wrote About the War (New York: Brentano's, 1931), p. 95.

(9) Disarmament is possible but delusive. The League must balance and morally control arms. Making war physically impossible cannot be done.

(10) There should be no neutrality as it is impossible to maintain.

(11) Wilson by intellectual and moral superiority must make certain his views predominate. He must awaken America to the gravity of the world wituation.[73]

Shaw was not the only intellectual to be concerned with the fate of the world after the war. Austin Harrison edited The English Review and wrote articles in such journals as Nineteenth Century, Contemporary, National Review, Fortnightly, and North American Review. Born March 27, 1873, Harrison was educated at the Universities of Lausanne, Marburg, and Berlin. Besides articles, he authored several books The Pan-Germanic Doctrine, England and Germany, and The Kaiser's War.

Harrison wrote in the English Review an article entitled "Covenant or Tilsit?" in which he stated that the powers meeting in Paris had a decision to make regarding what the peace would be. He pointed out that as a result of the conference the League of Nations would become the greatest world power because it would control the "hunger-points" of Europe. It just so happened that these "hunger-points" were also the points of honour of the belligerent nations. Thus we would still have the German-Polish rivalry at Danzig, Italian-Jugo-Slav rivalry at Fiume, Turk versus Russian at Constantinople, and German versus French-

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[73]George Bernard Shaw. What I Really Wrote About the War (New York: Brentano's, 1931), pp. 304-305.

man in the Saar.[74] Food is the key to the League's power as the League deprives the defeated powers of the economic resources necessary for recovery. The League then becomes the punisher of the defeated powers, thus taking over the role of the victorious powers. This is why the League was brought into being according to Harrison. No true principles caused the Covenant to evolve and it will not solve the problems which caused the war.

> The root points of war--colour, religion, economics, nationality--remain untouched. They will remain unsolved.[75]

In another article entitled "Peace or War?" Harrison pointed out the difficulty involved in achieving a certain degree of fairness at Versailles. A subtle criticism of Wilson's idealism was the point here.

> We dare not, for instance, fight for nationality and at the same time debar the Germans from claiming nationality.[76]

The problems lay in the fact that Wilson believed that wars could be halted in Europe once all nationalities were allowed to join their homelands. He did not take into account the fact that Great Britain and France desired the punishment of Germany. Thus self determination was denied the Germans. In 1936 Hitler was very careful to state that he was merely following the principles of self determination in annexing Austria. Simply stated, Wilson's idealistic pronouncements on self

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[74]Austin Harrison, "Covenant or Tilsit?" English Review, XXVIII. (Jan.-June 1919), 540.

[75]Ibid., pp. 541-542.

[76]Ibid., p. 75.

determination were used to start World War II.

When discussing what the peace turned out to be one must be aware of the personalities involved at the peace conference. The British intellectuals were well aware of the differences in personalities of the characters at Versailles as well as the problems those differences would cause.

H.G. Wells stated that the problems of the conference began with the election of Clemenceau as its president. As a professional patriot, Clemenceau sounded a note of revenge when the true business of the conference should have been the future of mankind.[77] When such a man as this came up against a man like Woodrow Wilson, the result had to be the breaking of one of them. According to Shaw, Wilson came to Europe to stand for Republicanism. This was his mission.[78] The problem was that when he got to Paris, he went war mad and began to talk of war guilt like any jingo. The strain of peace had finally broken him.[79]

All of this occurred because of fundamental errors which Wilson fell prey to. Wells describes them in his Outline of History. The major error was Wilson's own conduct of the war and negotiation of the peace. He made the whole affair a personal vendetta: the peace became Wilson's peace, even in his own mind. Wells believed that Wilson should not even have come to Paris. By doing so, he became overly involved in

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[77]H.G. Wells. The Outline of History: Being a Plain History of Life and Mankind (New York: Macmillan Co., 1921), p. 555.

[78]Shaw, What I Really Wrote About the War, p. 281.

[79]Ibid., p. 314.

the proceedings when he could have stayed home and more strongly exercised the force of moral principle.[80]

Wells stated that Wilson compounded the blunder of coming to Paris because he was not expert in the intricacies of European power politics. Wilson's list of books showed a mind directed exclusively to American history and politics.

> He was mentally the new thing in history, negligent of and rather ignorant of the older things out of which his new world had arisen.[81]

Besides not understanding European politics very well, Wilson's over-all naivete rather limited his effectiveness. At Paris he was dealing with hardened realistic politicians who often grew tired of Wilson's idealistic attitude. Clemenceau expressed his disdain for Wilson by saying that the President "talked like Jesus Christ" and that with his Fourteen Points Wilson was "worse" than God, "Le bon Dieu only had ten."[82]

Although Wells believed that there were great differences between Clemenceau and Wilson, Shaw stated that the differences were not so great. A debate in the French chamber which began on 27 December showed this.

> Wilson--If the future had nothing for us but a new attempt to keep the world at right poise by a balance of power, the United States would take no interest, because she will join no combination of power which is not a combination of all of us.[83]

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[80]Wells, The Outline of History, pp. 550-551.

[81]Ibid., pp. 543-544.

[82]Ibid., p. 556.

[83]Shaw, What I Really Wrote About the War, p. 292.

Clemenceau stated for his side:

> There is an old system, the balance of power, to which I remain faithful. This system seems to be now condemned; but if such a balance of power had preceded the war, and if Britain, America, France, and Italy had agreed to say that whoever attacked one of them would be attacking the whole world, this atrocious war would not have taken place. This system of alliance shall be my guiding thought at the Conference. I shall make all possible sacrifices to this end.[84]

Essentially Wilson and Clemenceau were in agreement, at least as to the ends if not in means. Both men wanted peace but each had a different way of maintaining it--Wilson through the League of Nations and Clemenceau through the balance of power against Germany. Wilson's conceptien of the League as a force to be reckoned with by any nation contemplating war was the same idea Clemenceau held when he stated that any attack would be construed as an attack upon the whole world. The result in both cases would be the same.

Journalistic opinion of the treaty of peace was mixed in its reaction to the terms. Austin Harrison, an opponent of revanche as we have already seen, wrote that:

> The conditions of peace which are to be dictated to Germany have never been equalled in history. In their meticulous laceration, their continuous stringency, their throttle-hold on the vitals of a nation, they are without a precedent; and if there is a certainty, it is that the 'Wilson' peace, once so feared by extremists, will go down to posterity as the most comprehensive document of punishment on record.[85]

Harrison doubted that the treaty with its harsh treatment of Germany was the best way of making the world "safe for democracy" as was origin-

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[84]Shaw, What I Really Wrote About the War, p. 292.

[85]Harrison, "Covenant or Tilsit?", p. 531.

ally intended.[86] All the talk of new democracies and self determination was put aside when it came to Germany. Thus the idealism of Wilson's Fourteen Points was used only when the Allies, most especially France, saw fit and not applied in the same manner to Germany.

While most of the intellectuals were concerned with certain general matters, John Maynard Keynes concerned himself with the very specific problem of reparations as it applied at Versailles. Keynes was an extremely interesting character. A man of urbanity and wit, he criticized the important figures assembled at Versailles. Some examples of Keynes's opinions on general topics will suffice to show his style. Of the "negotiating" of the Versailles Treaty he said "there are few episodes in history which posterity will have less reason to condone."[87] Concerning the British "Khaki" election of December 1918 Keynes stated: "a vote for a Coalition candidate meant the Crucifixion of the Anti-Christ and the assumption by Germany of the British National Debt."[88] His views on President Wilson are well enough known that they do not bear repeating here, but Keynes's opinion of the treaty generally and the League of Nations in particular is extremely interesting. He viewed President Wilson and General Smuts as firm believers in the League as a force to be involved in the revision of the treaty. Keynes believed that Articles V and X (the unanimity and collective se-

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[86]Austin Harrison, "The Throttle-hold", English Review, XXVIII. (Jan.-June 1919), 539.

[87]John Maynard Keynes, The Economic Consequences of the Peace (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Howe, 1920), p. 145.

[88]Keynes, Economic Consequences, p. 144.

curity clauses) made the League an instrument for the preservation of the status quo rather than an instrument for progress.[89] In this view Keynes was siding with such men as Herbert Croly, Walter Weyl, and Walter Lippmann, the editors of The New Republic, who felt that the League of Nations would only make a bad situation worse. Generally the supporters of the League believed that it would operate by the influence of public opinion throughout the world. Keynes hoped that this would be the case but he felt that trained European diplomats would use the League to obstruct and delay necessary change and progress.[90]

Keynes was temporarily attached to the British Treasury during the war and was the official representative of that department at the Paris Peace Conference until June 7, 1919. He resigned when he became aware of the fact that the treaty was incapable of being modified. Keynes believed that the attempt to force Germany to pay general war costs was politically unwise and could only lead to disaster in the economic realm. This would occur because the basic problems of Europe were economic, not political or social. The difficulties were enhanced because neither Wilson nor Lloyd George were aware of the economic ramifications of their proposed solutions.[91] Keynes believed that resignation was the only way he could make his views apparent. In the cabinet system of Great Britain this was a wise and logical step which had its intended effect of alerting the public to what was occurring at Versailles.

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[89]Keynes, Economic Consequences, pp. 257-260.

[90]Keynes, Economic Consequences, p. 259.

[91]Ibid., p. 146.

Keynes's own estimate of a reasonable reparations payment would have set a sum of 10,000,000,000 dollars which Germany would have to pay. His estimate of what the Allies and Associated powers were demanding as reparations from Germany ran as follows:

British Empire	$ 7,000,000,000
France	12,000,000,000
Italy	2,500,000,000
Others (including U.S.)	3,500,000,000
Total	$ 25,000,000,000[92]

Keynes believed that the treaty contained nothing concerning the economic rehabilitation of Europe. Thus he could do nothing but view the future pessimistically.[93] He blamed the representatives of the United States for this draw-back as they had no concrete proposals to alleviate the sufferings of Europe.[94] The best way to alleviate the sufferings of Europe, Keynes felt, was by a cancellation of war debts by the United States. The only problem was that this was an unthinkable idea for most Americans. Keynes believed, however, that even an abatement of part of the debt would have helped greatly.[95]

The economic problems could have been solved before the conference if the United States and Great Britain could have agreed upon the following points:

(1) cancellation of all inter-Allied debts.

(2) a set sum of 10 billion dollars for reparations.

(3) renunciation of reparations by Great Britain.

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[92]Keynes, Economic Consequences, p. 160.

[93]Ibid., p. 226.

[94]Ibid., p. 150.

[95]Ray Stannard Baker, Woodrow Wilson and the World Settlement. (Gloucester, Mass.: P. Smith, 1922).

(4) an agreement as to the appropriate proportion of reparations to be guaranteed to all other parties of the treaty.

(5) the issuance of bonds by Germany to cover the amount of reparations.[96]

Since these questions were not dealt with prior to the conference, Keynes had a solution after the conference was over. Several of the points are the same but many are new to deal with the exigencies which had arisen:

(1) reparations and costs should be set at 10 billion dollars.

(2) the surrender of merchant ships, submarine cables, war material, and claims against territory should be set at 2.5 billion dollars.

(3) the balance of 7.5 billion dollars should be set with no interest pending repayment. It should then be paid in thirty installments of 250 million beginning in 1923.

(4) the Reparations Commission should be dissolved or brought under the control of the League of Nations. It should also include representatives from Germany as well as neutral countries.

(5) Germany should meet the annual payments as she sees fit. Complaints should be lodged with the League.

(6) no reparations should be demanded from Austria.[97]

It is interesting to note just exactly what some of these provisions imply. For example, suggestion number five is essentially the same thing as the Young Plan which would come into being several years later. Number five also forbids any unilateral action against Germany such as the French took in 1923 when they occupied the Ruhr. Thus we can see that while Keynes viewed the League as a moralistic device, he did believe

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[96]Keynes, Economic Consequences, pp. 147-148.

[97]Ibid., pp. 261-262.

that it could act as a strong force in international politics.

Essentially Keynes was a firm believer in the idea that the financial problems of Europe could be solved only by magnanimity and not be greed.[98] Probably the best testament to the significance of John Maynard Keynes comes from Seth Tillman who wrote on Anglo-American relations at Versailles:

> Had John Maynard Keynes been a member of the Reparations Commission, it is quite possible that Sumner and Cunliffe would have had to pay close attention to his views as a representative of the British Treasury. Keynes's own analysis of the German capacity to pay led him to the conclusion that an overall reparations sum of $40 billion, or even $25 billion, was not within the limits of reasonable possibility. When the issue of the fixed sum was taken up by the Supreme Council, however, it was the views of Sumner and Cunliffe, and not of Keynes, which influenced Lloyd George, bringing him into direct collision with President Wilson.[99]

It is most interesting to note that the representatives on the Reparations Commission for the British Empire were Hughes, Cunliffe, and Sumner--three who were in favor of demanding huge sums from Germany. Indeed how different things might have been if Keynes had been there.

In the two decades following the end of the war the problems wrought by the reparations issue came to a head. In this period John Maynard Keynes was proved correct in his views of what would happen if the economic difficulties were not solved at Versailles. It cannot be said that the reparations issue caused the rise of Hitler but a good case can be made to show how reparations affected his rise indirectly. In 1923 a grave economic crisis hit Germany. Inflation was rampant. At one point

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[98]Keynes, Economic Consequences, pp. 147-148.

[99]Seth P. Tillman, Anglo-American Relations at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1961).

the rate of exchange reached one trillion marks to the dollar. Reparations certainly did not help avoid this crisis.

With such horrible inflation, many men were put out of work. These were the men from which Hitler recruited his forces. Dissatisfaction with reparations, war guilt, and Germany's new government fueled the fire which forged Hitler's tyrannical state.

The loans from the United States did not help matters much as they were used to meet the reparations demands of the Allies. It almost seemed as if the United States was trying to make up for her oversights at Versailles, but it was too late. Even though the reparations demands were later liberalized by the Dawes and Young Plans, when the great crash came it struck Germany especially hard. Hitler was just around the corner. It is important to note that reparations had been virtually done away with by the time of the crash and depression. However, even though this was the case, the economic difficulties inherent in the reparations problem remained. The damage had already been done and it could not be reversed.

A relatively minor point but one which received some attention from the intellectuals was the six month continuation of the blockade of Germany after the armistice of 11 November and its attendant effect upon the mood of the country. In reality the blockade was not that bad. It did cause inconvenience and hard feelings among the Germans but the claims of mass starvation were exaggerated. The intellectuals, however, seized on the blockade as proof of man's inhumanity to man. Austin Harrison disliked the blockade because it was unfair and arbitrary. He believed that it would be removed only when the people let the politi-

cians know that they will not allow the enemy to be starved in the name of the League. Harrison saw the blockade as a reflection of the anti-German feeling enthroned in Paris.

> The thing of Paris is not gentlemanly. It enslaves our enemies and degrades the victors. And it creates continuous conditions of war. Thus Armageddon ends in farce.[100]

George Bernard Shaw also took up the case against the continued blockade. He compared Great Britain's use of the blockade to Napoleon's turning of his cannon on the ice when he caught the Russians on a frozen lake. When the shooting stopped he then tried to save the drowning Russian soldiers. With characteristic overstatement Shaw then asked why we were starving the children of Germany. "Are we out, not merely for defeat, but for extermination?"[101] He then went further, stating that the reparations could not be paid if the German industry was ruined and the workers starved. Even slaves must be fed as well as beaten.[102]

Henry Noel Brailsford approached the whole punishment issue from another angle. He travelled in Germany after the war and wrote concerning the mood of the people there. He stated that there was a great deal of self-guilt and hopelessness about the situation. Even the German papers condemned such acts as the violation of Belgium, the devastation of the Somme, and the U-boat war.[103] In short, the Germans were sorry for their

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[100]Harrison, "Covenant or Tilsit?", p. 557.

[101]George Bernard Shaw. Prefaces by Bernard Shaw (Long Acre, London: Odhams Press, Ltd., 1938), p. 495.

[102]Ibid., p. 496.

[103]Henry Noel Brailsford. Across the Blockade (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1919), pp. 115-116.

sins and were ready to admit to some degree of guilt. However, this woeful mood passed with the publication of the Treaty. The Germans saw the terms as the Allies' project for the destruction of their industry in order to be rid of a commercial rival.[104] Thus the indemnity and loss of foreign trade would ruin Germany. Germans would be forced to emigrate because they would be unable to buy food from abroad. The problem would then become one of where could the Germans go.

> Mr. Hoover has predicted that ten or twelve million Germans will be forced to emigrate. Whither? North America is closed. The Argentine is legally open, and Russia one day will be open. But shall we tolerate a German 'penetration' of Russia? Will the ghost of President Monroe allow Latin-America to be Germanized?[105]

This united the country under the banner of resistance to the terms. The rise of men like Adolph Hitler can be seen as a reflection of this resistance and a logical outgrowth of it.

In summary, what occurred at Versailles was not what Woodrow Wilson or the intellectuals of Great Britain had in mind. Instead of a just peace, what occurred was revenge and a continuation of the conditions of war.

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[104]Henry Noel Brailsford. Across the Blockade (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1919), pp. 118-119.

[105]Ibid., pp. 124-125.

CHAPTER FOUR

The League of Nations

The League of Nations came into being as the major hope for maintaining peace in a troubled world. The intellectuals of Great Britain were essentially men of hope and vision but their disagreements concerning the League are most interesting. While all agreed as to its necessity, they were involved in the important questions of what the League should do and by what means these things should be done.

The League was viewed as necessary as a means of achieving stability and security. Brailsford pointed out that there were two concepts of security which were within the realm of possibility. The first was security imposed by a force which had the ability to make the world submit to its will. The second, and more pleasant concept, involved a world which had purged itself of its worst elements to achieve security. This second concept Brailsford believed was in the offing.[106]

> Theoretically, the only security seems to lie in some organic international association, which, by the creation of intimate and pervasive relationships of interdependence within itself, is at least in process of evolution towards the ideal of international solidarity.[107]

In its initial formation the League must face two tests if it is to

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[106] H.N. Brailsford, A League of Nations (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1917), p. 324.

[107] H.N. Brailsford, The Covenant of Peace: An Essay on the League of Nations (New York: B.W. Huebsch, 1919), p. 8.

survive. First, the League's composition must be such that all members are assured the prospect of the fair settlement of disputes, thus making war unnecessary. Second, if the worst does occur and war breaks out, the League must be strong enough to gain superiority over the warring powers. If the League is unable to achieve superiority, it is doomed to failure.[108]

This second point was Brailsford's most telling one. He saw that the coalitions and alliances had become very strong and that their continuation meant that every war would be a universal one. Thus it would be the task of the League to break up the alliance systems.[109] This was the reason for the necessity of the League, according to Brailsford.

The intellectual concerned mainly with arguments for the necessity of the League was H.G. Wells. He believed that the League was necessary because war had become so destructive. The choice was between an organization of permanent peace or the progressive development of war and the ultimate destruction of civilization.[110]

Wells based his beliefs on the assumption that war by its very nature is illimitable. Since war is a cessation of law and order it would be impossible to prevent the use of all means of killing. Wells saw that many people would not accept the fact that war could not be limited, preferring to believe that a code of conduct or type of chivalry could be used to impose restrictions on the making of war. Wells countered this by stating that it would be easier to abolish war than to res-

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[108]Brailsford, A League of Nations, p. 47.

[109]Brailsford, The Covenant of Peace, pp. 11-12.

[110]H.G. Wells, The Idea of a League of Nations (Boston, 1919), p. 8.

trict it because a nation could very easily be swept along if the enemy were not bound by the same self-imposed restrictions.[111] This very example occurred during the war with the problems engendered by Germany's invasion of Belgium as well as the continued use of the submarine. Germany viewed the invasion of Belgium as a necessity in the same way she viewed continued unrestricted submarine warfare. The Allies saw these same German necessities as atrocities. The point was who was to be the referee to determine what would be legal and what would not when the world was at war. More importantly, would the referee be strong enough to insure that his decisions would be upheld?

Wells went even further to prove his point concerning the illimitability of war by stating the case of the Argive-Lacedaemonian struggle at Thyrea mentioned in Herodotus. Here the struggle was to be determined by a test of champions. The terms were that 300 from each side would battle to determine the victor. The armies were sent home so that they could not help if their side got into trouble. The two sides were so evenly matched that by the end of the day only three men were left, two Argives and one Spartan. The two Argives, regarding themselves as victors, went home. The Spartan stayed behind to strip the Argive dead before going home. When the armies learned of the result both claimed victory, the Argives because they had more survivors, the Spartans because they had stayed on the field to strip the dead while the enemy ran away. The battle which both sides had sought to avoid was then fought anyway.[112]

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[111] H.G. Wells, The Idea of a League of Nations (Boston, 1919), pp. 16-18.

[112] Ibid., pp. 22-23.

Thus even the concept of limitation of war had its difficulties when it actually came to putting the plan into operation. Again, who was to referee in order to determine the victor when the victory is not clear-cut? Wells believed that it was possible for nations to agree not to resort to force when they have suffered injustices, either real or imagined. It was quite against human nature that, having appealed to force, those nations should limit its use and accept defeat rather than cross the stipulated boundaries.[113]

Having stated reasons for the League's necessity, Wells recognized that there were certain objections which could be raised against the League. First there was the biological objection which states that the end of war is impossible because all life is conflict. Man expands and increases his control by conflict and the fittest survive. Wells pointed out that life as conflict was a misconception when applied to war because war was not discriminatory. The fittest do not survive. Admittedly this was not the case when wars were fought with spears as the strongest did survive. Even with the advent of firearms, alertness, alacrity, and wit could keep a man alive. But the new modes of warfare rained down death in an entirely haphazard manner. Modern war involving millions of men killed those men in a haphazard manner. No amount of strength helped a man in those circumstances. In fact, the shirkers and the parasitical members of the society profited.[114] Survival of the fittest meant that the society would continue to prosper and grow. With

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[113]H.G. Wells, The Idea of a League of Nations (Boston, 1919), pp. 24-25.

[114]Ibid., pp. 28-29.

the less fit surviving the society could only decline.

Another objection to the League which Wells foresaw and replied to was the argument that the mechanical and chemical advances brought about as a result of the war were good and necessary if the world is to advance. Wells admitted that the advances were necessary but that the cost was out of proportion to the overall gain. The best men, the healthiest and the most intelligent, had died in the trenches as a result of the mechanical and chemical advances. Wells simply asked whence will come the great scientific men of the future to consolidate and continue the technological gains?[115] The League thus was necessary if man was to survive in the face of his continued gains.

The final and perhaps major objection to the League which Wells foresaw was the objection from precedent, the view that there had never been a League and so there never will be one. The people who believed this were generally narrow in outlook, disliking the "international" aspects of a League. Their sense of patriotism was very great but it was not real patriotism but a dislike of interference in the life of the nation.[116] Wells pointed out that nationality was not threatened by the formation of a League but the obsession to power was. This obsession had been built up in the eighteenth century by a Machiavellian spirit.[117] Wells believed that the world would be a much better place with the power obsession destroyed. Pride and love for one's country could remain but without the power obsession, both were harmless.

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[115] H.G. Wells, The Idea of a League of Nations (Boston, 1919), pp. 31-32.

[116] Ibid., pp. 33-36.

[117] Ibid., p. 39.

Thus Wells believed that the primary business of the Allies was the organization of a League of peace. The League must include Germany as that country was the heart of Europe but Wells recognized that true reconciliation would not be possible until the present generation died.[118]

Other intellectuals agreed with Wells on the point of the inclusion of Germany in the League. George Bernard Shaw stated that the difficulty in forming the League is not to get all nations into it but to keep the incompatible ones out. He believed that the League had to be founded on common ideas, institutions, levels of civilization, and philosophies of life. Without the United States, Great Britain, France, and Germany the League could not function at all.[119] G. Lowes Dickinson did not believe that the League was necessarily a panacea for the evils of war but felt that Germany must be allowed into the League because it was not intended to be a league against Germany. Dickinson stated that if Germany was left out, she would intrigue to break up the League. Thus the menace to peace would be greater with Germany outside the League.[120]

Another argument in favor of German entry into the League was voiced by Dickinson. He pointed out that if Germany were excluded, the United States would not join the League and that Wilson had said as much in a 22 January 1917 speech to the Senate when he stated that the League was to be a new order, not a continuation of the old.

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[118] H.G. Wells, What Is Coming? (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1916) pp. 290-293.

[119] G.B. Shaw, What I Really Wrote About the War (New York: Brentano's, 1914), p. 291.

[120] G.L. Dickinson, The Choice Before Us (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1917), pp. 259-260.

> The question upon which the whole future peace and policy of the world depends is this: Is the present a struggle for a just and secure peace or only for a new balance of power, who will guarantee, who can guarantte, the stable equilibrium of the new arrangement? Only a tranquil Europe can be a stable Europe, there must be, not a balance of power, but a community of power: not organized rivalries, but an organized common peace.[121]

Wilson was speaking to an audience that was somewhat hostile to his ideas concerning the solution of Europe's problems. The whole concept of the League was based on control of the power to go to war. Article ten bore the burnt of much criticism on both sides of the ocean as it appeared to take away a nation's power to go to war.

> The contracting powers unite in guaranteeing to each other political independence and territorial integrity against external aggression.

Henry Noel Brailsford recognized this and stated that if the League was to work the member states must at least allow disputes to be arbitrated before resorting to war. This did not mean that states had to give up war as a last resort or as an assertion of their own independence but that before hostilities actually occurred there would be a moratorium for "cooling-off".[122]

All of the intellectuals had ideas regarding what they felt the League had to accomplish. To H.G. Wells, the most important thing the League had to do was to halt war. He stated that war had grown out of proportion to any good which even the most complete victory could bring. This state of affairs came about as a result of the mechanical and che-

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[121]G.L. Dickinson, The Choice Before Us (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1917), pp. 260-264.

[122]Brailsford, A League of Nations, pp. 295-297.

mical advances made in the name of war. Wells used the example of the tank to show the danger of what could happen if war was not prohibited.

The cost of a tank was very high, about forty thousand dollars, and the weapon itself was not yet all that useful. Wells foresaw a time when, unless war was prohibited, bigger and better (and necessarily more expensive) tanks would need to be built. Stores of them would be needed and the cost would be enormous. Money for the tank program would have to be diverted from important social programs and in the long run the entire society would suffer.[123]

Wells's speculation proved surprisingly accurate in the 1930's when the naval race occurred. More and bigger ships were built by Japan, Great Britain, and the United States so that each could feel secure against the others. This was how the cycle began--it ended with World War II.

Since the issue of neutrality had been one of the motivating factors for World War I, the intellectuals believed that something needed to be done about this rather useless condition. George Bernard Shaw believed that the entire concept of neutrality should be discarded by the League. Shaw felt that neutrality was absurd as it "assumes that a country does not exist with regards to war". Belgium was neutral in 1914 but Germany knew she had to get to Paris quickly. To gain passage through Belgium, Germany offered to pay and to do no damage. According to Shaw, Belgium's refusal to Germany's request became an act of war by Belgium on behalf of the Allies. An acceptance of the request would have

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[123]Wells, The Idea of a League, pp. 9-10.

been an act of war by Germany against the Allies. Thus by the mere request for passage the neutrality of Belgium collapsed.[124] Admittedly Shaw's reasoning is a little weak on the point of Belgium's refusal of passage constituting an act of war unless one understands just exactly what neutrality means. Neutrality means that a country will not take sides in a war. By definition, neutrality offers no protection against attack. Belgium was acting the role of peace-keeper in Europe in 1914. Germany could not attack France without violating Belgium unless she wanted to deal with the Maginot Line. To expect neutrality to withstand the realistic problems wrought by war was shortsighted at best and disasterous in the long run.

G. Lowes Dickinson also believed that neutrality should be abolished so that no League member could refuse to take sides against a state breaking a treaty of the League.[125] Dickinson hoped that the abolition of neutrality would act as a deterrent to war. If a state knew that when it broke a League treaty it would have to face all the members of the League aligned against it, that state might think twice before acting.

On the issue of nationality some of the intellectuals were in disagreement. Wells believed that the League of Nations was impractical as long as it sought to stereotype boundaries and peoples when it was impossible to do so. The societies in the United States and the nations of Europe developed quite differently and are constituted quite different-

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[124]Shaw, What I Wrote, p. 300.

[125]G.L. Dickinson, Problems of International Settlement (London: Publication for National Peace Council: G. Allen and Unwin, 1918), p. xii.

ly. Wells saw Europe as the problem until it would stop thinking in terms of nations and unite.[126] The League by stereotyping boundaries only exacerbates the problem which already exists.

H.N. Brailsford took a different stance. He believed that Europe could be saved by nationalism with self-determination as the key to the situation. For example, the people of Alsace were strongly independent and did not want to be either French or German. They could become an Alsatian state by being established as a neutral under the protection of the League thus ending one of the most prominent feuds in Europe.[127] At first glance this seems to be a workable solution but problems soon spring to mind. This new Alsatian state was to be neutral at a time when the concept of neutrality was under attack. However, Alsace practically would have to be neutral if peace was to be maintained for the Alsatian population would contain both German and French elements. Unless the League was extremely strong, the most prominent feud in Europe would not be over.

Brailsford was a true believer in self determination, feeling that free votes should determine which way disputed areas should go with regards to nationality.[128] These free votes would then be accepted by the world as the will of the people and the will of the League.

If the League was to uphold its will for the good of the world it had to have real power. Shaw felt the League must have first-rate

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[126]Wells, Salvaging of Civilization, pp. 64-65.

[127]Brailsford, A League of Nations, p. 135.

armament if it was to survive against the League of War.[129] Brailsford believed that there was no better first-rate armament than the British navy and that it should be turned over to the League as its main force against aggression. Brailsford saw that if the British navy were left outside the jurisdiction of the League, that body's decisions would bear no weight.[130]

This is what H.G. Wells feared. He stated that the League was inadequate because it had no representative sanctions, no military forces, and no real authority. Wells said:

> People have a way of saying it (the League) is better than nothing. But it may be worse than nothing. It may create a feeling of disillusionment about world-unifying efforts.[131]

As an example of this kind of faulty reasoning Wells related the story about a mad elephant in a garden. If one wants to be rid of the elephant he must give the gardener an adequate weapon. To give him a rook-rifle, say it's better than nothing, and encourage him to face the elephant is a good way to get rid of the gardener.[132] The League of Nations without sufficient means of force will also fall before its own mad elephant.

The intellectuals did not debate only what the League should do but also what type of organization it should be. All were not in agreement as to the concept after which the League should be modelled. George

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[129]Shaw, What I Wrote, p. 80.

[130]Brailsford, A League of Nations, pp. 200-201.

[131]Wells, Salvaging of Civilization, p. 14.

[132]Ibid.

Bernard Shaw viewed the League as the crux of the Fourteen Points--a group of nations constituting a trusteeship of peace. The important word for Shaw was nations; the League was not to be a federation of man.[133] Shaw was being somewhat less idealistic than some of his intellectual conpatriots who saw the League as a unique achievement for mankind--something which would promote brotherhood throughout the world. Shaw stated that the League must not be "conceived as a Tolstoyan celebration, but as a very vigorous organization of resistance to evil."[134] Shaw realized that the old dangers were still present in the world and so relied on a strong League to wield the power to keep the peace. He believed that the League would function best if it were organized in much the same way as the United States; that is, one major power arising from a conglomeration of smaller states.[135] The United States had risen from small disparate segments to become the most powerful nation in the world. Certainly the League could bring together disparate nations to become the most powerful force in the world. However, Shaw realized that before this could be done each nation would have to put its own house in order. The League would be concerned primarily with international affairs, not domestic affairs.

H.G. Wells disagreed with Shaw on this point. He believed that the League of Nations had the ability to create a "new world", a world government exercising world control.[136] Wells was not in favor of the

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[133]Shaw, What I Wrote, p. 289.

[134]Ibid., p. 273.

[135]Ibid., p. 290.

[136]Wells, Salvaging of Civilization, p. 15.

League of Nations because of what it was inherently--a league consisting of nations. This, he believed, could only lead to further conflict and ultimately war. Wells wanted a league of mankind, a force which would transcend national boundaries and petty obsessions.[137] The League would then be a promoter of world-wide brotherhood and peace would be much easier to maintain.

G. Lowes Dickinson agreed with Wells. He stated that the League could not and would not work unless a new spirit came over the governments and peoples. The League was to be this new spirit but it must not be allowed to become an instrument of the old power policies.[138]

Wells believed that world peace could come about because of the will for a "world law under a world government". This world government would in essence create a world league of men thus transcending a mere League of Nations.[139] Wells did not feel that a mere League of Nations would work because the project of a world-wide league was a little too much for complete American participation and not enough to meet the needs of Europe. Thus the idea of a true world state, although a more idealistic project, would be a much sounder proposition.[140]

Wells had very definite ideas as to how this world state should be established and what it needed to be successful. He realized that national chauvinism must be contained and that patriotism must be en-

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[137]Wells, Salvaging of Civilization, p. 77.

[138]G.L. Dickinson, Causes of International War (London: Swarthmore Press, 1920), p. 91.

[139]Wells, Outline of History, pp. 583-584.

[140]Wells, Salvaging of Civilization, p. 49.

larged to the concept of a world state. The common aim of world peace would be enough to bring this unification about.[141] The best place to start in order to release mankind from the bonds of nationalistic obsession was with the children. The means would be a little truthful history, something which Wells found sadly lacking in contemporary education.[142]

Once all this had been achieved and war had been eradicated from the world, the League of Nations could begin to pursue more cultural aims, thus producing "ennobled individuals whose city is the world".[143] This was to be, in Wells's estimation, the true role of the League. The world awoke after the outbreak of war in 1914 to a new system of realities antagonistic to national states. The national quests for power had ended in world-wide war which could truly destroy nations. Wells believed that the case for the League of Nations rested here. The League would achieve peace and then act as a coordinator of human affairs.[144] Such things as war would then be impossible and man could truly prosper and fulfill his destiny.

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[141] Wells, Salvaging of Civilization, p. 71.

[142] Ibid., pp. 74-75.

[143] Wells, Idea of a League, p. 44.

[144] Ibid., pp. 5-6.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

The intellectuals of Great Britain did not, in most cases, fit into the same mold of thinking as their countrymen. While most Englishmen were appalled by Germany's actions, the intellectuals, for the most part, tried to view both sides in a logical and reasonable manner. G. K. Chesterton did not fit in with the other intellectuals but was important because he adequately represented the views of the average Englishman. Chesterton's characteristic overstatement was more than counterbalanced by the other intellectuals, most especially George Bernard Shaw.

With the understanding of the inclusion of Chesterton as a foil, the similarity of views of the rest of the intellectuals becomes more apparent. Shaw, Dickinson, Russell, and Wells saw neutrality as unrealistic as well as foolhardy. They held little sympathy for Belgium, viewing her demise as a fortune of war. Thus Germany was not to be condemned simply for violating neutral Belgium. The war had come about as the result of the machinations of both sides; thus blame could not be apportioned to only one side.

Both Shaw and Wells agreed concerning the importance of the technological advances as they changed the essential character of war. The advent of the tank, the submarine, the machine-gun, and poison gas had an overwhelming effect on the old rules of war. All these weapons

changed the essential character of war as they were instruments of sudden death on a massive scale. For example, mounting an old-style full-scale charge with thousands of men against well-fortified machine-gun emplacements was not only foolhardy, it was disasterous. The old rules of war could not keep pace with the new weapons of war.

Once the war was over the real disagreements among the intellectuals began. Most of the thinkers agreed that Germany had to be included in any post-war organization but what that organization was to accomplish and by what means was not agreed upon.

Germany was to be included in any post-war League of Nations or she would intrigue to break it up as the Germans could only view the League as an alliance against them. When it turned out that Germany was to be punished, many voices spoke out. Austin Harrison and George Bernard Shaw voiced their anger over the continued Allied blockade of Germany after 11 November. Henry Noel Brailsford travelled in Germany and reported on the mood of the people after the war. He saw the dissatisfaction which unscrupulous men would capitalize on to rise to power.

Perhaps the major theme Hitler used in his rise was war-guilt but the ramifications of Article 231, the war-guilt clause, were best exhibited by the issue of reparations. John Maynard Keynes was the intellectual most concerned with this aspect as he saw the dangers inherent in wholesale reparation demands.

The main disagreements between the intellectuals arose over what the League of Nations should be as well as what it should do. Most intellectuals agreed that the League must halt war but they could not agree on the problem of nationality. H.G. Wells believed that nationalism was

the bane of the world and that if left untouched it would destroy Europe. H.N. Brailsford believed that a principle of nationality was necessary if stability was to be achieved. Thus the people of the major areas of contention (i.e., Alsace, Danzig, etc.) would be allowed self-determination in order to decide their national allegiance. It is easy to see how this continuation of nationalism could conceivably lead again to war if a major power decided to try to influence the plebiscite in an area of contention.

Regarding what the League of Nations should be H.G. Wells voiced the opinion that the League should be a league of men as opposed to a true League of Nations as Shaw and others wanted. Nationality would be superceded by a world league of men as all humanity would be united by the common bond of peace. Thus it would be possible to escape the destruction of future wars. All of the intellectuals agreed that a new war had to be avoided at all costs. The utter destructiveness of the war had had its most telling effect on the men who fought in it. However, the term "lost generation" applied just as readily to those who were physically maimed or psychologically scarred by the violence as it did to those eight million who died as a result of the conflict. This was what caused the intellectuals to shift from the optimism of the first decade of the twentieth century to the pessimism of the 1920's--the terrible toll which the war took in lives, material, and social advancement.

H.G. Wells noted in his Outline of History that hundreds of possible Newtons, Darwins, and Bacons died unfulfilled in the trenches.[145] This

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[145]Wells, Outline of History, pp. 588-589.

was perhaps the greatest tragedy of the war, the worst atrocity, the greatest crime against humanity--the terrible waste of human life. Thomas Gray penned best these sentiments in a more peaceful time in his "Elegy".

> Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
> A youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown;
> Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth
> And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

APPENDIX A

excerpt from

OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

(From The Nation of the 7th November 1914)

Sir I petition you to invite the Neutral Powers to confer with the United States of America for the purpose of requesting Britain, France, and Germany to withdraw from the soil of Belgium and fight out their quarrel on their own territories. However the sympathies of the neutral States may be divided, and whatever points now at issue between the belligerent armies have no right to be in Belgium, much less to fight in Belgium and involve the innocent inhabitants of that country in their reciprocal slaughter. You will not question my right to address this petition to you. You are the official head of the nation that is beyond all question chief of the Neutral Powers, marked out by commanding magnitude, by modern democratic constitution, and by freedom from the complication of monarchy and its traditions, which have led Europe into the quaint absurdity of a war waged formally between the German Kaiser, the German Tsar, the German King of the Belgians, the German King of England, the German Emperor of Austria, and a gentleman who shares with you the distinction of not being related to any of them, and is therefore describable monarchially as one Poincare, a Frenchman....

Now that this mischief has been done, and the two European thunder clouds have met and are discharging their lightnings, it is not for me to meddle with the question whether the United States should take a side in their warfare as far as it concerns themselves alone. But I may plead for a perfectly innocent neutral State, the State of Belgium, which is being ravaged in a horrible manner by the belligerents. Her surviving population is flying into all the neighboring countries to escape from the incessant hail of shrapnel and howitzer shells from British cannon, French cannon, German Cannon, and, most tragic of all, the Belgian cannon; for the Belgian army is being forced to devastate its own country in its own defence.

For this there can be no excuse; and at such a horror the rest of the world cannot look on in silence without incurring the guilt of the bystander who witnesses a crime without even giving the alarm. I grant that Belgium, in her extreme peril, made one mistake. She called to her aid the Powers of the Entente alone instead of calling on the whole world of kindly men. She should have called on America, too; and it is hard to see how you could in honor have disregarded that call. But if Belgium says nothing, but only turns her eyes dumbly towards you whilst you look at the red ruin into which her villages, her heaps of slain, her

monuments and treasures, are being hurled by her friends and enemies alike, are you any the less bound to speak out than if Belgium had asked you to lend her a million soldiers?... I am thinking of other things: of the honest Belgians, whom I have seen nursing their wounds, and whom I recognize at a glance as plain men, innocent of all warlike intentions, trusting to the wisdom and honesty of the rulers and diplomatists who have betrayed them, taken from their farms and their businesses to destroy and be destroyed for no goodpurpose that might not have been achieved better and sooner by neighborly means. I am thinking of the authentic news that no papers dare publish, not of the lies they all publish to divert your attention from the truth. In America these things can be said without driving American mothers and wives mad: here, we have to set our teeth and go forward. We cannot be just: we cannot see beyond the range of our guns. The roar of the shrapnel deafens us; the black smoke of the howitzer blinds our imaginations. For justice, we must do as the medieval cities did: call in a stranger. You are not altogether that to us; but you can look at all of us impartially. And you are the spokesman of Western Democracy. That is why I appeal to you.

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